



इहानलपरेषा

A Cultural Journal



Dr. R. K. Srikantan
1920 - 2014



Smt & Shri G.V. Jannah
Centenary in February 2014.



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Front Cover :

Dr. R.K.Srikantan (1920-2014)

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IN FOCUS

The quarter saw the fall of a pillar of Carnatic music- Padma Bhushan Dr. R.K.Srikantan. He was a recipient of several awards including the prestigious National Eminence Award of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha in the year 2009. Dr. Rudrapatnam N. Tharanathan and Naresh Keerthi pay their tributes to this doyen of Carnatic music.

Music not only entertains but is an all-powerful tool to deliver any message- be it a national uprising or a peace dialogue, says Dr. Sakuntala Narasimhan in her article, Music with a purpose.

Dr. Nithyashree Mahadevan believes that Carnatic music is spiritual and is a path to salvation. Read about this in Sudha Subramaniam's interview with Dr. Nithyashree.

Kudos to Vidushi Smt. Kalyani Sharma who was conferred the Sangeetha Kala Acharya Award by The Music Academy, Chennai, in recognition of her contribution as a Guru. Janaki Krishnamoorthi extolls Vidushi Kalyani Sharma's virtues as a Guru.

Read what P.Unnikrishnan has to say about some exemplary qualities of his Guru and mentor Smt. Savithri Sathyamurthy. Rasika Vishwanath pays a tribute to her Guru and grandmother, Smt. Savithri Sathyamurthy whose musical journey has touched the hearts of many.

While T.V. Sairam talks about the therapeutic effects of music, Garland N. Rajagopalan brings out the beautiful relationship between Maths and Music in his article.

Tukkada keeps you busy trying to figure out the correct answers to the Quiz on Sangeeta and Natya.

Sabha Roundup and Happenings at the Vidyalaya cover some of the major events that took place during the quarter.

Dr. R. K. Srikantan – The Maestro - A Tribute

Dr. Rudrapatnam N. Tharanathan



Dr. R. K. Srikantan

Hassan district in Karnataka state is known for agriculture, vedabhyasa and various performing arts. The rivers Hemavathi and Cauvery are a boon to the people of this district for a bountiful harvest. In Arkalagud taluka of Hassan district and about 60 kms from Hassan on the banks of the Cauvery, there is a sleepy village known by the name Rudrapatna which is the birthplace of a number of musicians of repute. Rudrapatna has thus come to be called Sangeetha Grama by music connoisseurs. Some of the prominent musicians who hailed from this place were Rudrapatna Krishna Sastry, Rudrapatna Shyama Sastry (they were together called Kallikote Brothers in the music circle those days, it seems), Veene Naranappa,

Rudrapatna Venkataramaniah (a composer too, his two Varnas in the Ragas Kedaragoula and Nayaki are beautiful compositions), and so on. Among them the four sons of Krishna Sastry, namely R.K. Venkatarama Sastry (Violinist, 1907-1993, a senior disciple of Mysore T. Chowdaiah), R.K. Narayana Swamy (Vocalist, 1913-2005, a senior disciple of Sri Musiri Subramanya Iyer, Father of Rudrapatnam Brothers), R. K. Ramanathan (Vocalist and Professor of English, 1917 -1987), and R. K. Srikantan (Vocalist, 1920 – 2014) stand apart as a Family of Musicians.

These musicians and many others in Rudrapatna belonged to a community called Sanketis, who originally migrated from Senkottai in Tirunelveli district of Tamilnadu several centuries ago. They settled in various places in Karnataka, namely Kaushika, Bettadapura, Chilukunda, Mattur / Hosahalli and other near-by villages. The Sanketis settled in Rudrapatna gained excellence in Carnatic Music, both Vocal and Instrumental, in addition to Vedic and Sanskrit knowledge, and Harikatha whereas Sanketis settled in Mattur / Hosahalli became proficient in Sanskrit and Gamaka Vaachana/Vyakhyana, in addition to agriculture.

R. K. Srikantan (RKS) had his initial training in music under his father Krishna Sastry. After moving to Mysore, and subsequently, RKS got exposed to Tanjavur Bani (style) of singing through his elder brothers R. K. Venkatarama Sastry and R. K. Narayana Swamy. Venkatarama Sastry, a violinist of repute, was employed as Staff Artist in All India Radio (AIR), Madras. He accompanied Smt. M S Subbulakshmi and other great musicians for over two decades, and this together with RKS's job later in Bangalore provided frequent opportunities to him to go to Madras and get acquainted with all the great music maestros of the time.

In the mid 1930's the first ever Broadcasting Station with a low power (50 watts) transmitter was started by Prof. Gopaldaswamy, for which the name "Akashvani" was coined later by a few well-wishers. Then initially RKS was asked to join as a temporary staff of Akashvani, Mysore particularly to teach music through Ganavihara programme. Later in 1955 when a regular AIR station was established in Bangalore and other places, the entire staff of Mysore Akashvani got transferred to Bangalore. This move provided RKS ample opportunities to come in contact and interact with all contemporary musicians and many literary giants of that time, which helped him immensely to mould his personality as well as singing. Through Ganavihara RKS became a household name in the music circles in Karnataka, and he became a very popular and much

sought-after musician. RKS was instrumental in directing and conducting a number of features/programmes based on rare compositions of the musical trinity, other composers (Swati Tirunal, Patnam Subramanya Iyer, Mysore Sadashiva Rao, Jayachamaraja Wodeyar, Mysore Vasudevachar, Veene Sheshanna), Haridasas, Vachanas, and so on.

RKS was a graduate (B.A. degree) of Mysore University. His music was very pleasing and authentic, be that the notation or sahitya. He was adept at various facets of sampradaya, as he had mastered all the pancha – suddhams, namely sruthi, laya, sahitya, bhava and aesthetics (rasanubhava) suddhams, which naturally moulded his music pretty well. RKS gave music concerts in almost all the places where Carnatic music is cherished, both in India and abroad. He was a visiting professor at Sri Venkateswara Temple, Pittsburgh, and he regularly participated in the Thyagaraja Aradhana Fest at Cleveland, USA. For all his achievements, innumerable awards, titles and accolades adorned him. Prominent among them were Sangeet Natak Academi award (1978), TTK award from Madras Music Academy (1981), Karnataka Rajyotsava award (1982), Chowdaiah memorial National award (1994), Sangeetha Kalanidhi (1985), Kanaka-Purandara award (1992), etc and recently the prestigious Padma Bhushan award (2011). For his signal contributions to music the Bangalore University, during its annual convocation, conferred on him the Honorary Doctorate, a rare honour for any musician. RKS was made Asthana Vidwan of several organizations and Mutts, namely Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, Sri Sharada Samsthanam Sringeri, ISCKON, Bangalore, etc., Sri Shanmukhananda Sabha felicitated him with National Eminence Award in 2009.

RKS was a strict disciplinarian. He was simple, unassuming and gentle. He was always wearing white dhoties, white shirts and jari-bordered shalya (angavastra). I think he never wore jubba, and also modern dresses (pant and shirt!). Very rarely he used to wear coloured shirts, may be if at all at home, some light coloured shirts. He was a true traditionalist, never deviated from sampradaya, be it music or anything else. His passion for music was so remarkable that he would even listen to Hindustani music with the same interest and desire as for Carnatic music. He never stopped practising music, even in his ripe age; sometimes he used to practise for hours together with his students. Accordingly he was taking utmost care to maintain his shaariram (throat) and also of course shariram (body). He would never venture to eat cold-refrigerated food and also spicy - oily foods at home or elsewhere. Perhaps, even he did not bother too much about household requirements, as the same were ably taken care of by his wife Smt. Maitreyi. She normally used to accompany him for most of the concerts, especially in the later years, which naturally gave him a moral boost to perform better. Imbibing the best of past music maestros RKS developed a style of his own.

RKS was very well versed in giving lec-dems on several interesting topics such as allied ragas (Ritigoula-Ananda Bhairavi; Nayaki-Darbar, etc.), ghana raga pancharatna kritis, Dikshitar's compositions, etc. His Ganavihara programme from AIR, Bangalore, brought him a large number of students, apart from those who came home to learn directly under him. Several of his students have become leading musicians from whom we can hear RKS bani.

Coming to his physical stature, RKS was a neat, well-dressed person with a smile on his face. He was very much out-spoken and never fell short of pointing out the mistakes in others' singing. Even at his ripe age of 94 plus he perfectly maintained sruthi – laya suddham in the concerts. There was never a sign of either shaky voice or mistaken sahitya. He never indulged in too much of mathematics/gimmicks in swara singing. His words/speech bore the testimony of clarity and diction. He was soft-spoken. Even in his so called angry moods, he would never lose control of his temper and soft voice. He preferred to elaborate rakti/ghana ragas in depth with a vilamba kala kriti. He would rarely sing vivadi ragas in a concert.

During the mid-1990s, RKS suffered a severe jolt in his life. He fell ill, which disturbed him physically as well as musically for quite some time. But subsequently, by the Grace of God, he came out of that problem and managed to perform as before, the only change being of sitting on a chair while performing. All these never distracted him even a bit; he took it very sportively and enthralled the connoisseurs all over. He tuned many compositions of Haridasas, which have gained wide appreciation by rasikas.

RKS's only mission in life was that he should keep singing till the end! On January 14th, 2014, under the banner of RK Srikantan Trust, his 94th birthday celebrations were done in Bangalore in a grand manner. Subsequently, a few days before his demise RKS gave a lingering concert based on Dasa Sahitya in Bangalore. Just after that, he fell ill due to breathlessness and other complications, and he was admitted to the hospital. Unfortunately, the final call from Heaven rang and on February 17, 2014 at around 9.30 pm he breathed his last, and took leave of all his admirers, relatives and a host of sishya parampara.

May RKS's soul rest in peace forever!

Dr R.N.Tharanathan, Additional Director (Retd.), CFTRI Mysore, is a renowned musician (Younger of the Rudrapatnam Brothers).

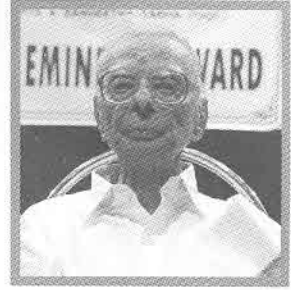
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Remembering the maestro - Dr. R. K. Srikantan

Naresh Keerthi

With the passing away of the veteran Sangeeta Kalanidhi R.K.Srikantan on 17th February this year, we have lost an important link to the senior generation of musicians, a generation which has formulated our current understanding of Carnatic music. He will be remembered by senior rasikas as a fine example of the older style of Carnatic singing – graceful but vigorous, and by the youngsters as the remarkable nonagenarian who could sit ramrod straight for three hours and deliver a faultless concert without pausing to sip a cup of coffee.



Dr. R. K. Srikantan

Early influences

Growing up in Mysore in the first quarter of the twentieth century, R.K.S was exposed to the music of the greatest Carnatic and Hindustani virtuosos from all over the country. These musicians all made a beeline for Mysore attracted by the generous patronage of the Wodeyars, and the equally warm and discerning reception of the local musicians.

It was always a pleasure to listen to R.K.S talk about the past masters. With a glint in his eyes, he would praise the sonorous and expansive *tanam* of Vasudevacharya, the sparkling *janta swaras* and *sphuritas* of Sheshanna's Veena, the honey-smooth bowing of Dwaram Venkataswami Naidu and Govindaswami Pillai. He would dwell on the exciting *swarakalpana* of the Alathur brothers, the riotous *alapana*s born of Maharajapuram Vishwanatha Iyer's unusual imagination, and the dignified *kriti* presentation of Musiri Subrahmanya Iyer. He acknowledges Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer and Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar as major influences in his ideas about 'stagecraft' and concert planning.

R.K.S would also praise other younger musicians like M.L.Vasantakumari and M.S. Subbalakshmi, whose music fitted into his aesthetic philosophy for Carnatic music. He would narrate with pride, how MS and he exchanged compliments over the Suddha Dhanyasi song *Narayana ninna namada smaraneya* – he praised her for the soulful singing and she commended him for the excellent tune he had composed.

Repertoire - many aces up his sleeve

One thing that strikes students and rasikas about R.K.S's concerts is his huge, seemingly endless cache of compositions. In an interview, he has described, how after learning up all the compositions in the family repertoire (all of R.K.S's brothers were musicians), he would request visiting maestros – Vishwanatha Iyer, Ariyakudi, Semmangudi and Musiri to teach him specific songs, and then he would assiduously notate them and practice them.

R.K.S's brother Venkatarama Shastri, who was a practising violinist in Madras, would send him new notations periodically, which he added to his collection.

R.K.Srikantan's was an original style, influenced by all the greats that he heard, but stamped with his individuality. He combined the *kampita*-ornamented Tanjore style of singing with the unadorned minimalist vocal style that was prevalent in Mysore to forge his particular technique. He believed in full-throated singing, and wouldn't croon or whisper even while traversing the *tara sthaya* notes. Once, after a concert where he sang *Vatapiganapatim*, and began the *neraval* by roaring "pranava-swarupa" in the *tara gandhara*, I asked R.K.S about this full-throated singing style. He said, "Yes, that is the Mysore vocal *bani*. The legends like Bidaram Krishnappa would

sing in a voice resonant like a bronze bell so that an audience of even a thousand could hear them clearly. Also, this fashion of voice production ensures that there are no faults in the singing, since every single flaw will be evident.”

Srikantan did not merely collect kritis, he also had a keen ear for good sangatis in a familiar song or arresting sancharas in a known raga. An anecdote to illustrate – The centenarian Dr. Sripada Pinakapani had released a set of tapes on appreciating music, in which he illustrates an unusual phrase in *todi* - *nsr,-s,,n-dd*, as a *sanchara* used by M.Govindaswami Pillai, and bemoans the absence of such aesthetic phrases in the current treatment of the raga. I was struck by this comment, because the *sanchara* wasn't unfamiliar to me, and I realised upon some rumination, that it was part of a *sangati* for the *swarajati Rave himagirikumari* in R.K.Srikantan's *pathantaram*. I had mentioned this to Dr. Panigaru, who had fulsome praise for the classical richness of R.K.S's music. I think this praise from another giant speaks much more about R.K.S than anything that I could say.

The radio sojourn – making waves

R.K.S spent a long duration as an employee of All India Radio, Bangalore and produced several valuable and memorable programmes on AIR. Sangeeta Bhushanam Celvapulle Iyengar had learnt Mahavaidyanaatha Iyer's Melaragamalika from Sabhesha Iyer at Annamalia University. R.K.S learnt it and it was produced as a programme of 6 episodes, featuring Celvapulle Iyengar and R.K.Srikantan singing in perfect unison. The critic B.V.K.Shastry had glowing praise for the production dubbing the singers '*Rudrakote brothers*'! (after the singers' hometowns *Rudrapatnam* and *Melukote*).

He introduced the music lesson to AIR Bangalore and taught several rare and unknown compositions over radio, enabling hundreds of music enthusiasts to learn uncommon songs like *Srivishwanatham* the fourteen raga ragamalika composed by Dikshitar. Other programmes that he contributed to, include productions of the 108 kriti suites on Chamundeswari and Shiva composed by Muthiah Bhagavata. This programme used several songs sung by him, and was running even at the time of his demise.

Commitment to Kannada compositions

R. K. Srikantan took great pride in his Kannada identity and always emphasizes the role of Karnataka in Carnatic music. He was known for tuning the songs of the Haridasas in the original ragas found in oral traditions or in manuscripts. Even when he chose to tune a song in a *deshiya raga* like *Behag*, it would be redolent of an old world beauty and a sense of propriety. In this matter Srikantan carried forward the work of his close friend N. Chennakeshavayya, who worked hard to collect and publish traditional tunes for the *devaranamas*. R.K.S has also sung concerts which entirely featured the Kannada compositions. These would be as weighty as any other concert of his, because of his choice of ragas like *Saurashtram*, *Mukhari* and *Kedaragoula*.

R.K.S's fervor for Kannada is evidenced by another anecdote. He once sang an RTP concert for AIR with the *pallavi* '*Hari namava bhajisiro! Bhava-bandhava kaLeva-(Hari..)*' set in the same format as the traditional *Todi pallavi* '*Nelata marulukonnadi*'. This was very well received.

Teacher par excellence

All the talented musicians in Karnataka and elsewhere, who have received guidance from Srikantan, are the greatest testimony to his musicianship. He was a wonderful teacher – kind yet firm, full of humour, yet unbending in standards. I end my note with an anecdote. Srikantan Sir was teaching a set of *Veena Sheshanna's* compositions as part of a workshop. The participants

included teenagers as well as (very) senior citizens. The highly professional attitude RKS took while teaching was a sight to be seen. Even as a group forty strong was singing in chorus, he would identify one person who hadn't got it right. He would ask her to sing again, and then correct the fault.

While he was teaching us a tillana in the raga Kannada (This tillana has an archaic version of the raga employing both nishadas), we struggled to sing the solkattu lyric, which was a real tongue twister. Sir patiently repeated the line and said, giving his characteristic smile, "If it is difficult for you people, we can slow it down a little".

This person, more than four times my age, was suggesting that we could slacken the tempo if it was too much for us! It was humbling and amazing at the same time. Such artistes come but once in an era. R.K.Srikantan will live on in the memories of his rasikas and in the music of his disciples, like the enduring notes of a tambura.

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Shri Manna Dey (1919-2013)

Manna Dey

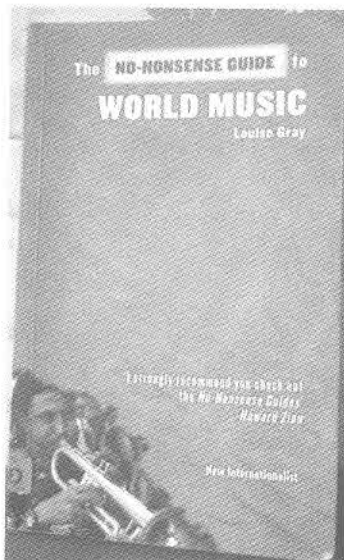
Legendary Bollywood singer Manna Dey, whose official name was Prabodh Chandra Dey, breathed his last in Bangalore on 24th October 2013 at the ripe age of 94. Manna Dey was initiated into classical music while he was in college, by his uncle, K.C.Dey. He learnt from his uncle, Ustad Dabir Khan, Ustad Aman Ali Khan and Ustad Abdul Rahman Khan.

Manna Dey was a versatile singer. He could sing intricate raga-based songs and folk songs with equal ease and comfort. He could send the listeners into raptures with his lilting numbers and it is not surprising therefore, that awards came easily to him. He is the winner of the Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan and the prestigious Dada Saheb Phalke Award. Some of his popular Hindi film numbers include *Aye mere pyaare vatan* (Kabuliwallah), *Zindagi Kaisi yeh paheli hai* (Anand), *Pucho na kaise maine rain bitaayi* (Meri Surat Teri Aankhen) and so on. He has sung in several languages which include Bhojpuri, Assamese, Punjabi, Gujarati, Marathi, Kannada and Malayalam (the famous *Maanasa Maine* from the award winning film Chemmeen). He has also lent his

voice for Shri Harivansh Rai Bacchan's 'Madhushala'. India has indeed lost a gem who will continue to shine through his songs.

Music with a purpose

Dr. Sakuntala Narasimhan



The 25th anniversary of a globally significant musical event passed quietly, two years ago, almost unmarked. A pity, because this was about using music, not merely as entertainment, or for mood-elevating, soothing transcendence, but for churning up popular indignation and drumming up support for social betterment or opposing oppression.

Sounds strange? Think of Subramania Bharati's patriotic songs in the pre-independence years, or Paluskar's renderings of Ram dhun and bhajans to generate patriotism among the people, to throw off the colonial shackles. Using songs for protest of various kinds has been a feature of the cultural history of many countries around the world, and my attention was drawn to this aspect of music by a very readable compilation of examples from around the world*.

In 1987, the phrase world music was coined in London by a group of record producers and dealers who found that they had records that could not be categorised as either classical, folk or pop but had "everything from everywhere", borrowing from different genre, cultures and regions, and more importantly, was part of a movement for making socio-political statements (against oppressive regimes, or mobilizing a sense of nationality, for example). It is not fusion or collaboration, but a different entity -- music meant as activism.

In Portugal, the fado (a musical form originating from Portuguese indigenous folk music) was used by one of its greatest exponents, Amalia, to sing subversive songs with lyrics by leftwing poets, to express dissent under the oppressive Salazar regime; when she died in 1999 the then prime minister declared three days of national mourning, such was her reputation as an influential artiste. Africans who were captured and transported to work on American plantations as slaves during the 18th-19th centuries, sang the Blues – it was the only creative articulation they could turn to, in a life where the slaves could not protest against hardships and injustice. It grew into a musical brotherhood. Reem Kelani used the Palestinian musical narrative to make a political statement as a lament for a lost cultural Palestinianism that wove Muslim, Jewish and Christian heritages together, just as Negro music bemoaned, through music, a lost African heritage as well as lost freedoms and human rights.

In Rwanda, Simon Bikindi (born 1954) composed rap music that was used to mobilize support for a national ethnic identity. The power of his music was such that it was cited during the court indictment against him at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Elsewhere in Africa too, several musicians used music to make political statements -- of defiance, opposition, dissent, nationalistic sentiments, and racial pride. Black Africa's rhythmic toyi-toyi was used during the apartheid struggle. Zimbabwean president Mugabe in fact banned the toyi-toyi in 2004 because it was so potent. Fela Kuti, the Nigerian inventor of the Afrobeat (combining Yoruba rhythms, jazz and Ghanaian elements) "played politics through music" as the British *Guardian Weekly* once put it. His house in Lagos was once at the heart of the "biggest musical movements Africa has seen". Fela used music as a vehicle of protest against Obasanjo's military regime and was imprisoned. When he died in 1977 one million people reportedly turned up for his funeral.

Looking at the genre of world music or “activists' music”, on a wider canvas:

When Professor Amy Catlin Jairajbhoy of the University of California who has spent over three decades on studies of Indian music (and was the first American student of musicologist T. S. Parthasarathy of Chennai) organized a day-long seminar on devadasis and their musical traditions in Bangalore in January 2014, one of the songs she presented in her documentary film was an articulation of protest by a young devadasi, about the life she was being condemned to, through her ritualistic dedication to Goddess Ellamma in Karnataka. Feminist thumris exist, composed by contemporary artistes, to draw attention to the fact that patriarchy oppresses females. (Thumris mostly describe a woman's pangs and yearning for her beloved who has failed to turn up and has spent the night with another woman, while she waited the whole night ; very few of the lyrics are about her lambasting a recalcitrant lover. There are, however, a few Kshetragna padams where the woman ticks off the man for his unfaithfulness or dalliance. The point is that these being in Telugu, most performers do not spotlight the message of the lyrics, so padams are enjoyed as pure musical entities without reference to the content of the lyrics, so these would not come under 'protest songs').

I have heard women's groups using the qawwali form to ad lib on particular themes, taking off from the opening line of some popular and widely known qawwali. While this may not have been intended as a statement of revolt, it provided fun even while drawing attention to the content (far more acceptable, than a dry speech about women's lot!) Senior feminist activist Kamla Bhasin of Delhi often uses music to make her point about social injustice and practices that demean the female. These can be far more eloquent than spoken statements, because the music lures and entertains even as it delivers its message – which is what world music is all about.

If we can have uprisings spawned by music, and 'diplomacy' through cricket, why not peace dialogues through music too? Israeli and Palestinian artistes have been brought together to make music. I was part of an Indo-Pak jugalbandi three years ago, during an international feminist conference in Karachi. We chose to perform a new raga called Aman (peace) created specifically for this collaboration. In fact, even some centuries ago, Akkamahadevi and Meera used music to articulate ideas about patriarchy and social constraints.

Extend the concept, and perhaps we can have musical performances (any genre – classical, pop, fusion) with lyrics on corruption! Music need not be merely for entertainment. The possibilities are endless, as many artiste-activists mentioned by Louise Gray have shown in different parts of the world.

P.S. -- And just in case some reader challenges the title to say, “Doesn't classical music, or raga alapana without lyrics, have a 'purpose' too? Of course it has (devotional, emotional, transcendence, or even 'sangeetaananda' and rasaanubhooti, or therapy) but the purpose I refer to here, is not the aesthetic-artistic one but something that goes beyond, as a statement.

* *The no-nonsense guide to world music* by Louise Gray (www.nononsenseguides.org, and www.newint.org)

Dr. Sakuntala Narasimhan is a Bangalore-based journalist, author, musician and consumer rightsactivist.

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Dr. Nithyasree Mahadevan - Carrying on the Lineage

Sudha Subramaniam



Dr. Nithyasree Mahadevan

On 25th August 1973, Nithyasree Mahadevan entered this world straight into the lap of music. Carnatic music courses through her veins and the heart and soul of music are gathered into her mellifluous renderings. In this exclusive interview, Nithyasree reveals her poignant love for Carnatic music which she opines is one of the paths to salvation and how her enriched experiences remain a treasure-trove of fond memories.

You are carrying on the lineage of stalwarts- your paternal grandmother, D. K. Pattammal, granduncle D. K. Jayaraman, mother Lalitha Sivakumar who was your first Guru, your maternal grandfather the mridangam maestro Palghat Mani Iyer and your father, I.Sivakumar, himself an accomplished mridangist-how do you perceive this unique legacy?

It is indeed the greatest thing that has happened to me. I have grown up amidst legendary and epoch-making people in the world of music. My life has revolved and evolved around them. My kind and loving maternal grandfather Palghat Mani Iyer passed away when I was just seven years old. My mother (Lalitha Sivakumar) was my first Guru. I grew up in Paati's (Pattammal's) shadow. My mother and I would accompany her on all her concerts. Music was all around me; it was my very life's breath and I thrived on it and was nourished by it.



Smt. D. K. Pattammal and Dr. Nithyasree Mahadevan

We would like you to give us an idea of the musical insights you gained from your paternal grandmother D.K.Pattammal.

My grandmother was very dedicated and committed to music. Music bonds us closer with the almighty, with the very essence of creation. I remember the intense vibration I used to experience when I shared the platform with her. It is no exaggeration when I say that my grandmother (D.K.Pattammal) effortlessly sang the numbers with such aplomb that the vibrations were not just physical but took the mind to an elevated plane. I recollect one incident very well. Pattammal Amma was

giving a performance at the Music Academy in the mid-1980s. My mother and I accompanied her and we shared the dais with her. She sang a virutham in Tamil which had a very philosophical meaning; it was a Gopalakrishna Bharati song with wordings...*Ethanaitharavuvavaravenam*.... (the lines of the song asked God how many more times should we take birth and come and when would we become one with the almighty)..suddenly tears came to her eyes and she started crying, touched by the meaning of the words while rendering the song. Lalitha Amma started crying and I found the tears streaming down my face too. The audience too were weeping. That was the extent of charisma and the response which Pattammal Amma could evoke. Then she took hold of herself and sang on...the audience also matched their mood with hers.

How would you express your feelings for Carnatic music?

Carnatic music is not just entertainment. It is deeply spiritual and intellectual. It has profound aesthetic and devotional value and provides enlightenment and upliftment of the soul. Rasikas

who come to listen to Carnatic music seek to put themselves in a spiritual dimension. Carnatic music is a path to attain God. It is very deep, an ocean in itself and holds the wealth of spiritual consciousness.

Along the course, you have given a multitude of concerts in the United States of America, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, United Arab Emirates, Germany, France, Singapore, Malaysia and various other destinations throughout the world. What difference do you perceive in the Indian audience and the overseas audience?

I love my audiences and I try to feel their pulse also and accordingly sequence and select the songs I sing. In Andhra Pradesh I render more of Telugu songs, in Karnataka Purandaradasa Kritis, the Kerala audience love Swati Tirunal compositions. I endeavour to strike an optimum balance in song sequencing and accordingly select songs - *Samaja Vara Gamana* in Andhra, *Thaye Yashoda* in Tamil Nadu, etc... Nowadays the audience also like short pieces-specific kirtanam numbers and some lighter notes so we need to keep their interests in mind. Overseas, even in France, they love the traditional rendering and the French told me, "Sing the long piece for us". They were enthralled and delighted with Carnatic music.

We would like you to share any singular incident that occurred while giving a concert that stands out in your memory as something different along the course.

I remember beautiful Pondicherry and the spiritual and serene Vinayakar temple in Pondicherry where I was rendering a concert. The audience were squatting on the floor of the temple. Halfway through the performance an unkempt, ill-dressed man entered shouting in front of everyone. The temple secretary had to be called to handle the situation which was going out of hand. I continued singing. Suddenly, the man quietened, sat down and in some time he fell asleep.

The next day as I came out of the Guest house arranged for me, a well dressed gentleman came and fell at my feet. He said that he had been very mentally disturbed and had shouted and created the commotion yesterday. But the music had impacted him very deeply and had calmed his mind. He apologized for his rash behavior. I feel this speaks a lot for the positive energy and positive vibrations that Carnatic music unleashes.

There are so many types of music today. Fusion music is very popular. What is your opinion about the future of Carnatic music and classical music?

It is very safe. The younger generation is extremely keen to learn classical music. Some of them are very interested in the knowledge-gaining and voice cultivation that learning classical music alone can provide. Moreover, there are a number of seekers from all over the world who come to India to learn Carnatic music during their vacations and whenever they get the opportunity. They are learning through online classes, through skype, recording, etc...

As far as change is concerned, that is something we have to accept as a natural transformation. Change is the most constant factor. We must learn to adapt to the changing times and retain and strengthen true values and valuable art forms. Of course, nothing can replace the Gurunathar and the learning at the feet of the Guru.

Do you experience any difference while rendering a kutcheri or while singing in front of the divinity at a temple as compared to performing in Sabhas? Also, is there any experience that stands out in your memory from amongst the innumerable times you have sung at several temples?

Even when I perform for rasikas in a sabha, I feel myself in close proximity to the almighty. I find myself transported to an altogether different plane, a spiritual plane. Yet, while singing at a temple in front of the sannidhi, I feel myself enveloped by divinity in an inexpressible way. It is something

to do with the sanctity of the place, the strength of the faith reposed by millions, the unknown frontier that translates itself into an elevated energy plane and the sheer simplicity of the ultimate reality that beckons you from a dwelling place of noble minds. I can actually see God, can feel his presence.

I distinctly remember singing at the Arunachaleshwar temple on the occasion of Thiruvannamalaideepam. I felt like I was in Kailasam and even now the memory haunts me.

As a young child, which ragas did you find challenging?

Every raga is beautiful. Each song has a distinct beauty. Each composition unfolds spiritual dimensions. Each ragam is in fact an outpouring. The ragas Thodi, Bhairavi, Kambhoji, Shankarabharanam are ever appealing and of course more difficult and require perfection. The kaarvais are very important.

What advice do you have for students of music in terms of voice cultivation?

Each voice is different. Understanding your voice and your shortcomings is very essential. One need not have all good aspects alone. For example, those who can sing very well in high pitch may not be able to sing very well in mid-range or where low pitch is required. Knowing the shortcomings and overcoming the same through practice and training requires understanding, patience and regular practice. Practice alone makes perfect.

In terms of caring for the throat and voice, it is advisable not to have too hot or too cold food. Before a kutcheri I avoid very oily and very spicy food. I do not indulge in ice-creams, etc... I am not choosy about food. Then of course, there may be some food which does not suit some people. Pomegranate and green grapes do not suit me very well.

Students should drink three to four litres of 'chukkuvellam' regularly. Good hydration is important.

We would very much like to know your favourite South Indian dish and your favourite gravy.

I love dosai anytime and I love muringakasambaar.

Would you be so good as to let us know which your favourite sweet is?

As a matter of fact, I love sweets. I love the Bengal sweets of Kolkata; I love jangiri, adapradhamanpayasam, palpayasam.....

Which festival do you like the most?

I like all festivals. Navarathri is one festival which is very thrilling. We have all the beautiful customs and traditions of kolu, we propitiate the Goddess; the divine Goddess Saraswati lights the lamp of knowledge in our hearts and minds, there is celebration all around, we sing songs in praise of the Goddess and it is very appealing.....

You have performed in many countries. Of all the places you visited, which country do you find most captivating?

I liked New Zealand very much. I liked the tranquility, the natural beauty and the country in totality.

Are you techno-savvy?

If I need to manage skype, the computer, email, I can definitely do it. But as such, singing is just singing it like it is.....

What are your ambitions? Your desires? What would you ask of God?

I am happy and content with singing. Whatever role I have in life, God has linked it to singing and this is what gives me happiness. I have no desires or ambitions at all. I take everything in my stride. I would not ask God for anything. If I ask something, it may not be what is right for me. God knows what is best. I leave everything to the almighty.

Sudha Subramaniam is a professor and writer based in Mumbai.

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Sangeetha Kala Acharya Award For Vidushi Kalyani Sharma

Janaki Krishnamoorthi



Smt. Kalyani Sharma receiving the Sangeetha Kala Acharya Award from Hon. Governor of Andhra Pradesh, Shri. E.S.L. Narasimhan

Behind every good musician there is a great Guru who plays a critical role in making him or her come to the fore. Such Gurus go far beyond the call of duty in order to nurture their disciples' talent and motivate them to realise their full potential. Belonging to this notable clan of Gurus is Vidushi Smt Kalyani Sharma, a Mumbai based eminent Carnatic musician who has dedicated nearly six decades of her life to teaching Carnatic music to a large family of students, spanning three generations, many of whom are AIR artistes, musicians and teachers today.

In recognition of her immense contribution as a Guru, Smt. Sharma, was conferred the Sangeetha Kala Acharya award by The Music Academy, Chennai at their Sadas held on January 1, 2014. Shri E.S.L. Narasimhan, Honourable Governor of Andhra Pradesh, who presided over the function presented the award to her in the presence of several renowned musicians, rasikas and students. It was a proud moment for all her disciples, who had congregated from Mumbai, Chennai and overseas to attend the award ceremony.

In her typical reaction Smt. Sharma, a vainika - gayaki, attributed it all to her Gurus: "I feel deeply honoured and privileged to have received this prestigious award. As I always say, I consider it a recognition not just for my contribution but also for the rich, pristine music I imbibed from my great Gurus – Semmangudi Sir, Narayanaswamy Sir, Brindamma and the teaching abilities they ingrained in me"

This is the second award from Music Academy for her contribution as a teacher, the earlier one being the Bodhaka Award in 2008. Two others awards in a similar vein are Guru Shikhamani from Padam Mumbai (2014) Sangeetha Guru Shreshtaa from Powai Fine Arts, Mumbai (2011)

An A-grade artiste of All India Radio in both vocal and veena, Smt Sharma has performed widely in Mumbai and in South India under the aegis of several renowned Sabhas. She has also presented vocal concerts abroad including Singapore, New Jersey, Boston and Washington.

But teaching has always been her passion and her date with the profession began in 1956 when she joined the faculty at her alma mater, Swati Tirunal College of Music, Thiruvananthapuram after having qualified as 'Vidwan' in vocal and 'Gana Bhushanam' in Veena. After her marriage in 1960 she moved to Mumbai and continued to impart training in both vocal and veena at various reputed institutions including Sri Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya, Mumbai, from where she retired as Joint Director in 1999. Since then she has been training senior students privately at her residence.

"A teacher's responsibility is greater than that of a performing artiste" maintains the veteran Guru. "If performing artistes make mistakes at a concert, audience may notice and forget it. But if a teacher makes mistakes it will be carried forward through generations. So a teacher has to be more perfect and a good teacher will always be a good performer" she adds.

Apart from teaching rare krithis and scholarly compositions like Padams and Javalis to senior students, she has played a significant role in popularising Samudaya Krithis including

Navavaranam, Navagraha Krithis, Navarathri Krithis, Kovur Pancharatnam, Sri Rangam Pancharatnam, Lalgudi Pancharatnam, Kshetradana Krithis, Kamakshi Navavaranam, Kamalamba Navavaranam etc. In addition to the compositions, she had learnt from her Gurus, she took keen interest in expanding her repertoire of Samudaya Krithis on her own too.

A member of teaching faculty and an examiner of Bombay University for Carnatic music, Smt Sharma is also a member of the panel of recognised guides for training advance students in Government of India scholarships and a member of AIR audition board.

Even while writing books, her first thoughts were for the students. As a result the compositions in her three books – "101 Keerthana Mani Malai", "A compilation of Padams" and "Sri Kanchimamuni Pancharatna Haaram" have all been notated with the intention to make learning and teaching easy.

Even today at the age of 77, Smt. Sharma continues to devote much of her time to teaching and to disseminating the rich music she has imbibed from her great gurus in their purest form.

Janaki Krishnamoorthi is a journalist and a veena artiste based in Mumbai. She is a disciple of Smt. Kalyani Sharma.



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Savithri Sathyamurthy - My Guru, Teacher and Mentor

P. Unnikrishnan



*Shri P. Unnikrishnan with his
Guru Smt. Savithri Sathyamurthy*

"Savithri Aunty" was a wonderful, dedicated and disciplined musician and Guru. In the early 70's Smt Savithri Sathyamurthy moved to Chennai and in the year 1982 she had the special privilege of learning from Sangeetha Kalanidhi Dr. S. Ramanathan, "Master", as we called him. He was a musicologist and a musician of exceptional calibre. He had many good students including S.Sowmya, S.P. Ramh, Smt. Seethamani Srinivasan and Ashok Ramani, to name a few and amongst them was a teenager who had the potential but lacked discipline, and that was me! Master was my inspiration and while he taught me, Aunty would very carefully observe me during class. In the year 1986 Master was very ill and he asked Aunty to take the responsibility and make me a good singer. Never at that point did I ever imagine that this selfless woman would be one of my most significant influences in my career as a musician. But Aunty, who was very devoted to Master,

took it upon herself to do just that. She taught me literally several hours a day and made me a Carnatic musician. She did it not for self-gratification but for her guru for whom she had all the respect and affection. That was her Guru Bhakthi.

Understandably, like any young boy, I was always crazy about cricket. My father being a very good cricketer himself, it was in my genes as well and I did reasonably well for myself in school and college and continued to pursue it later and represent the first division league of the Tamilnadu Cricket Association. Cricket was always first on the list and music came only next. I realised rather late that I was destined to become a musician but better late than never so I needed somebody who could crack the whip and she was like a god sent. She was like a chisel and my music went through very, very watchful eyes. The way she corrected every note, every sangathi and made me understand the aesthetics and nuances of every raga, the handling of neraval, kalpana swara and how to plan a concert are all still so fresh in my memory. Although she learned from many great gurus, she completely imbibed the S.Ramanathan school of music. She would swear by his music and would not alter the patanthara even one bit. Such was her devotion to Master. She taught the junior and senior students with the same intensity and passion and made sure that whatever we learned in a class had to be delivered flawlessly in the next class. Her music was pure just like her heart.

I would like to touch upon some of the qualities of my Guru, Savithri Sathyamurthy. She was always very,very punctual, whether it was for a class, a doctor's appointment, or a social function. She never kept anybody waiting and by the same token she did not like to be kept waiting. Time was precious to her. She was very disciplined – to the point of driving us crazy, at times. If I had a class at 7.00 am I had to be there at 6.59. Fortunately for her, we were in the same building and so if she didn't see me by 7.05 am she would be at our door asking for me. She woke up at 4.30 a.m. no matter where she was and went for a walk at 5 a.m. She ate the right foods and followed

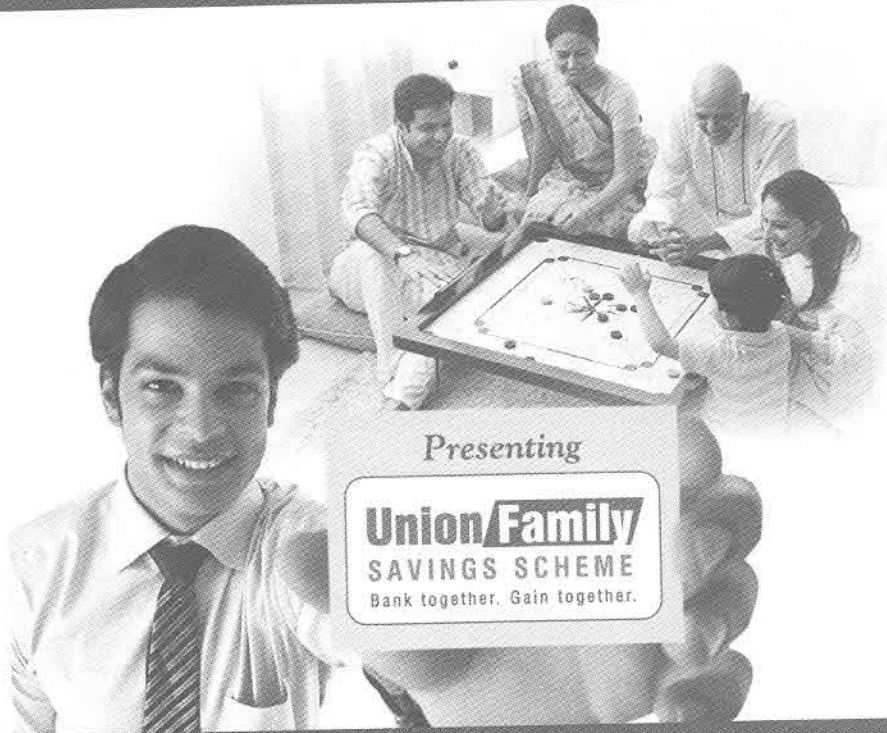
doctor's orders to the T. One of her doctor students once remarked that if everyone took care of themselves the way Savithri Mami did, he would have no patients at all! Such was her discipline. I know many students who left half way down the line because they could not cope up with her discipline and handle her teaching methodology.

She was prim and proper -- she was always impeccably dressed with every pleat in her sari in place. She was meticulous in everything she did and was always brimming with energy. For her there was no such thing as 50, 60 or 70%. Everything had to be 100%. She was ready to try anything out of the blue and would strike a clean chord with young and the old with equal ease and élan. That was her nature.

How to meticulously write and maintain song notations is something she taught me and all her students would vouch for the fact that nobody could match her dedication, sincerity and perfection in whatever she did. She was a good cook but I could never really visualize her slaving over the hot stove. But she made delicious idlis and every now and then would enjoy having me over for breakfast. She is no longer with us but not a day passes without her thought. It is emotionally challenging to actually talk and share a few thoughts about her but this is a small tribute to a great Guru and she will always be with me, guiding me through my musical journey showering all her blessings!

P. Unnikrishnan is a well-known and popular Carnatic musician based in Chennai.

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Savithri Satyamurthy : An embodiment of devotion to music and life

Rasika Viswanath



Smt. Savithri Satyamurthy

Every once in a while there comes a person whose life and accomplishments touch you very deeply. Savithri Satyamurthy was one such soul whose life and musical journey has touched the hearts of many accomplished musicians, students, music connoisseurs as well as rasikas across many different areas and cities.

Born to Meenakshi and Ramanathan, Savithri's musical journey started in the town of Hosur with violin lessons from Madurai Subramania Iyer. A move to Trichy opened up a whole new world of music for her. She earned her stripes under the strict tutelage of Erode Viswanatha Iyer. Her growing years involved spending three years as an inmate of the Ariyakudi household during which time she also honed her violin technique under guru Rajamanickam Pillai. You can only imagine the wealth of musical experience she would have gained in those early years with these stalwarts as her guiding light, Rajam Iyer, K. V. Narayanaswami, Madurai Krishnan as co-disciples and as a regular accompanist to Dhanammal.

Right from her childhood, Savithri was a stickler for meticulousness, discipline and punctuality. Punctuality and discipline were lessons she really took to heart from her primary school teacher in Trichy and lived by it all through her life. Marriage and a move to Bombay changed the direction of her music career. This move was the birth of "Teacher Savithri". Her already vast musical knowledge and insatiable urge to keep learning combined with her inherent qualities made her set exacting standards and expect nothing short of perfection from her students. Her music education continued in Bombay through the visits of stalwarts like Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillai, Madurai Mani Iyer and Ramnad Krishnan who stayed at her residence in Mumbai. Madurai Mani Iyer was especially fond of Savithri's special idlis for breakfast. After seeing her children well settled in life, she came to Chennai in 1972 and this resurrected the concert artist in Savithri. The musicians she got an opportunity to accompany in concerts represented the who's who of the Carnatic music world including Vidushis M.S.Subbulakshmi, D.K.Pattammal, T. Mukta, Mani Krishnaswami, R.Vedavalli and others. It also saw her blossoming as a teacher under the guidance of Dr. S.Ramanathan to whom she had also become a regular concert accompanist.

Complete devotion to music and her gurus as well as implicit faith in Lord Krishna were facets of her life that really stood out. The meticulous way in which she managed and maintained her music notations drew admiration from not only her students but many stalwarts as well. A number of Dr. Ramanathan's compositions are alive today thanks to her painstaking notation of his creations. The standards she set for her students were no different from what she set for herself. Her students would tremble at the thought of facing her even if they were a minute late to her classes or unprepared from the previous lesson. The quality of her teaching was the same regardless of where when and how she taught. Her students from across different generations having learnt from her several decades apart could come together and sing the compositions learnt from her in perfect unison. It was this rigour that produced from among her students a number of concert artists as well as music lovers and connoisseurs. A strict disciplinarian as a teacher, she was a deeply loving person and friend to her students outside of her classes.

Her journey has touched many lives and hearts along the way and she will be fondly remembered by all her students as well as the music fraternity.

Rasika Viswanath is the granddaughter and disciple of late Smt. Savithri Satyamurthy.

Indian Music: A Therapeutic Heritage

Dr. T. V. Sairam

It is a well-known fact that Indian classical music attaches great importance to serenity and thoughtful state of mind as its primary goal. As such, it helps in balancing the left and right hemispheres of the brain, which are assigned the functions of analysis and intuition respectively by neurologists.

Drone and its Psychic Importance

In the Indian systems of music-both in Hindustani and Carnatic, drone is an essential requirement. The drone that emanates from tanpuras can be compared to the state of equilibrium as it fully represents the essence of the musical scale on which ragas can be conceived. Drone offers the basic framework akin to a balanced mind, which has its inherent capacity to fall prey to emotional upheavals, ascendance or decadence, the same way a raga could meander.

Healing Ragas

According to an ancient Indian text, Swara Sastra, the seventy-two melakarta ragas control the 72 important nerves in the body. It is believed that, if one sings with due devotion, adhering to the raga lakshana and srutishuddhi, the raga could affect the particular nerve in the body in a favourable manner.

Certain ragas do have a tendency to move the listeners emotionally, as well as physically. An unintended nod of the head, limbs or body could be manifest when lilting tunes are played. The real impact of sound is more evident when there is a metallic screech which nails the nerves and makes the body undergo a sudden shiver!

Simple melodic structures, slow tempo, low-pitched notes which are repeated over and over again, as in bhajans and kirtans have been found to be soothing and relaxing. Such musical pieces are found to impart a sense of relaxed spaciousness, besides reducing stress, deepening breathing process, leading the listeners to consciousness frequencies akin to the Earth's electro-magnetic field.

While the descending notes in a raga (avarohi) is found to create inward-orienting or introvert feelings, the ascending notes (arohi) represent an upward or expansive mobility. Thus music played for the soldiers or for the dancers have to be more lively and uplifting with frequent use of arohi content. More ascending notes are found in war music or in joyous dance music all over the world. Similarly, melancholic songs should opt for 'smooth' avarohis. Although it may not be a rule as such, most of the Western tunes based on major keys play joyful notes, which those composed in minor keys tend to sound more melancholic or serious. Certain Indian ragas too have a direct impact on emotions, as they can create awe, joy, suspense or pathos. They can, depending on their form of gait, work even as a stimulant or a depressant.

Some recent experimenters in India

In India, music therapy is still in its infancy, though tremendous potential exists in its systematic study and application. In other words, Indians are sitting on a virtual gold mine of a great music tradition that promises curative results.

It is only in recent times that some psychologists (Dr. B N Manjula of NIMHANS), biophysicists (Srirama Bharathi of Chennai), neurologists (Dr. B Ramamurthy) and a few other scientists have started showing interest in this ancient art, notably among them, Dr. Raja Ramanna. They exist side by side with spiritual healers such as Ganapathi Satchidananda Swamy of Mysore, who for

example, has developed his own system of music for healing, which he says soothes 72,000 nerves and 14 essential nadis. The Swamy himself plays a Roland synthesizer to this audience with accompanying musicians.

Music for Asthma Sufferers

Pandurang Shastri Deshpande, a musicologist-cum ayurvedic practitioner from Pune has explored the beneficial impact of sounds of the mridangam and Pahadi ragas for those who suffer from breathing problems such as asthma. He has also carried out various experiments with ragas such as Bhairavi. Records of the raga, sung by nine different maestros were in experiments, played before nine potted 'touch me not' plants daily for a month to observe their impact. The plant that was exposed to Abdul Karim Khan's Bhairavi was found to exhibit a record growth of 430 percent compared to others.

Music to relieve Anxiety Neuroses

Dr B.N. Manjula, a psychiatrist at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) is reported to have used music (an hour of listening to sitar everyday and bhajans at night), along with minor doses of anxiolytic drugs to cure anxiety neuroses effectively. It is reported that this form of therapy can be of great use in aiding de-addiction.

Music and Herbs of Srirama Bharathi of Chennai

The biophysicist-turned therapist Srirama Bharathi of Chennai has conducted a unique experiment with 'sound and herbal therapy', in which patients were made to simultaneously view a picture, eat a herbal paste and listen to music. According to him music by it-self may not be therapeutic unless combined with other forms of medicine. He follows a traditional form of music therapy called 'arayarsevai' in which the traditional songs traditionally used in the temple rituals are sung.

Stress Relief Programmes for Police and Enforcement Personnel

It has been on record that the police personnel in Maharashtra found listening to music aids in relieving stress.

Music and Ayurveda - some Recent Research

Ayurveda views all diseases as aggravation of doshas. As each of the three doshas, kapha, pitta and vata refers to specific functioning such as maintenance, transformation and dynamic action respectively, it is pertinent to have an idea of the approximate time of a day in which each of them would, normally, be found in imbalance. According to Pandit Shashak Katti, who has worked with an anesthetist, Dr. Himalaya Pantvaidya, and an ayurvedic practitioner, Dr. Sanjay Chhajed, an approximate time chart could be drawn indicating the time of the day when a particular dosha remains aggravated, as indicated below:

Imbalance of the Dosha

	Timing I	Timing II
Kapha	7 a.m. to 11 a.m.	7 p.m. to 11 p.m.
Pitta	11 a.m. to 3 p.m.	11 p.m. to 3 a.m.
Vata	3 p.m. to 7 p.m.	3 a.m. to 7 a.m.

An inference from the above could be drawn that an appropriate morning raga could help in addressing the problems of kapha - aggravation, whose imbalance is common between 7 to 11

a.m. Similarly pitta imbalance (predominant during 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.) and vata imbalance (which is at its peak during 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.) could be addressed by selecting appropriate afternoon or evening ragas, as the case may be. After listening to the prescribed raga regularly for about 20-25 days, twice or thrice a day, patients were found to derive desired results. Disorders like arthritis, depression, insomnia, joint muscular pain, sciatica, etc. are reported to respond well to music, although disorders like asthma, diabetes and hypertension take longer time to get cured.

Pandit Shashank Katti has also found premature babies responding to music well and gaining weight. He has also found the role of music for easy delivery of babies in nursing homes. His team has brought out audio-analgesic cassettes for arthritis, back pain, joint pain, muscular pain, spondylitis etc. besides a host of ailments-acidity, asthma, colds, diabetes, easy child delivery, health promotion, hypertension, insomnia, liver diseases, migraine, etc.

Dr. P Bharathi has recently initiated an extensive research on music therapy in collaboration with the Ramachandra Medical College, Chennai. The culmination of her efforts is the Chaitanya series.

She has worked with post-operative patients for treatment and management of pain and found that patients in the post-operative stage are more receptive to music. It could be because pain makes one more aware of his or her body emotion. Added to this is the deep desire to be cured. All these factors along with physical immobility and lack of mental distraction, contributed to a remarkable recovery of many patients, when music was made available to them.

Some Therapeutic Carnatic Ragas

To cure insomnia, one listens to bits and pieces of Nilambari raga; likewise martial fervours are believed to be instilled in people by making them listen to pieces in Bilahari or Kedaram; Sriraga, when sung or listened, after a heavy lunch is said to aid in digestion and assimilation: While Saama raga is to restore mental peace, Bhupalam and Malayamarutham when sung before dawn serves as an agreeable invitation to people-including the Lord of the Seven Hills-to wake up from their slumber. Relief from paralysis is reported to be there by listening to pieces of Dvijaavanti Raga. Those who are prone to depression are often recommended a dose of lilt in Bilahari to overcome their melancholy. Nadanamakriya, yet another raga, is supposed to 'soften' the adamant people and even hardened criminals. Some of the ragas are taken here for a musical analysis to uncover their secrets. Readers may test these suggestions and see for themselves how far these concepts hold good-the same way a mother sings a lulla by with the hope that the child would be pacified by it!

Dr. T. V. Sairam is a former administrator and writes on alternative medicine including music therapy. He directs a distance learning course on music therapy.

INDIAN PASSION FOR MATHS Numerological Sway & Lure in Music

Garland N. Rajagopalan

*Gurur Brahma, Gurur Vishnuh Gururdevo Maheswarah;
Gurur sakshath Para Brahma tasmai Shri Gurave namah*

As I was chanting this prayer – the popular sloka on the Trinity of Gods - early this sunny New Year morn, a voice called me by name that recalled to my mind instantaneously the virtuosity, vivacity and subtle vitality of the voice of the percussion colossus of yester decades, the immortal maestro Palghat Mani Ayyar of fabulous, cherished name, unsurpassed fame and immaculate status at the helm in the virtuous realm of arts. Stunned at the extraordinary experience and thought, as the maestro had departed from this cultured native land as far back as on 29th May 1981 as his services were probably requisitioned at the ethereal world, I waited, floundered and trounced by conflicting thoughts. That voice of Ayyar's soul presumably gauged my cerebral bewilderment and took friendly efforts to enlighten me like the Lord of Brindavan on the battlefield of Kurukshetra.

"Raja! Why confusion? Hope you are aware of what Lord Shri Krishna had Himself advised Arjuna at the battlefield of Kurukshetra that 'The mortal corporeal body alone dies and perishes; but the soul is immortal that lives on forever'. I am that eternal, surviving Soul of Mani Ayyar in search of a befitting corporeal body to take over! I am truly glad that you are justly pleased to identify the voice as that of the Sangita Kalanidhi of old and draw delight in listening to his soul!"

As I sat dumbfounded, the mridangam maestro's everlasting soul continued:

"Friend! You recall the songs of venerable Dikshitar. Goddess Herself in this ancient karma bhumi, punya bhumi, dharma bhumi is hailed as the home and epitome of Sangita, Vadya, Vinoda Tandava, the triple wings of our virtuous arts! Our music of chaste version is gifted again with the triple attributes of raga, tala and swaras, systemized with well-conceived time intervals, diverse strokes, stresses and such other enthralling, innovative features. The musical soul is again enabled with the significant scientific, but manodharmic option to resort to any of the triple segments in the realm of pace, viz. vilambita, madhya and durita kalas! Our arts take note of and present, rather significantly, the triple division into Angikam [body], Vachikam [sound] and Aharya [ornaments]. At concerts, we have mainly the three-winged raga alapana, kriti and swara prastara. Such scientific, arithmetic-based, optional systematic classification, approach and the dominance of three segments or factors therein are not only striking but enrich and enliven the art itself. They constitute the vitality, strength and the gorgeousness of the everlasting structure and appeal of our arts to the joy of the rasikas. The unique wedding of assorted, arithmetical factors actually provides, lends multi-sided options to the artist to enliven and crown his vidwat with enhanced melodic beauty and magnetic allure. The ancient art of Bharat prospers in the context of diversified manodharmic combinations. It lends soulful joy not only to individual artists blest with scope to hop confidently among varied options but lends delight to worthy listeners morally greedy for virtuous, fragrant, pleasing variations!"

"Raja! To crown such arithmetic-based, art-conscious, scientific fascinating interplay of 'Triple factors' in our music and dance, we find ourselves bowing with respect to the venerable pillars of Classical Carnatic Music, the 'Trinity of Prime Composers' viz., Thyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Syama Sastri! We had a short time back a Trinity of top Lady Vocalists too, viz., MSS, MLV and DKP and the Quartette of prime male vocalists, Viz., Ariyakudi, Musiri,

Semmangudi and Chembai. Such winsome features invoking and spinning the charm of arithmetic into our alluring arts are many in the realm of art!"

Such dominant scientific features in our ancient, virtuous, manodharmic arts should have charmed the virgin heart of young Maths prodigy, Kudanthai Ramanujan of fabulous international renown! As he was actually born at Kumbakonam, then the Cultural Capital of our arts, it would be expedient to seek further illumination on the enduring, creative wedding of music and dance with maths from that Maths genius. Alas! Most regrettably, he expired too early in life harmed by his passionate adherence to unavailable vegetarian food in UK during the ferocious World War and other factors. The resort to mathematics to enrich, enhance and enliven arts and other themes probably commenced by the heavenly exposition in Bhagavad Gita by Lord Shri Krishna at the historic battlefield of Kurukshetra! Just recall a few passages from Chapter 17 therein as it helps to gather enlightenment on the fragrant blend of arithmetic not only with arts but with other topics like the triple classification into sattvika, rajasika and tamasika. Besides this revelation, a study of the chapter confers on you the triple boons of santam, soukhyam and mangalam. Such fantastic wedding of maths with arts, philosophy, etc., is significant. The soul of the Sangita Kalanidhi had moved out of my purview having left his alluring message on the wedding of maths and arts.

Garland N. Rajagopalan is a retired civil servant and author of the 'Garland' series of books, an inspiring and informative work on Carnatic music.

WRITE TO US !

We would love to get to know you, dear reader, and hear your views, suggestions and thoughts on the journal or any topic related to the performing arts.

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Tukkada - 5¹

Quiz on Sangeeta and Natya

1. At whose instance did Gopalakrishna Bharati compose a kriti in Abhogi?
2. What is upa pallavi?
3. Where does one find a reference to the raga for the first time although named differently?
4. What is the raga one gets if the arohana and avarohana of Garudadhvani are swapped?
5. Why is "varali madhyamam" so called?
6. Why is Mayamalavagaulai chosen as the first raga in learning Carnatic music?
7. What are referred to as "Ratna Traya" (the three jewels)?
8. "Ma ga sa' in descending sequence is enough to identify Nattaikurinji. Name the varnam in this raga that starts with these three swaras.
9. There are three variants of raga Bageshree in Hindustani music. What are they?
10. Which is the father of all gharanas in Hindustani music?
11. Who introduced swara singing in thumri in Hindustani music?
12. The first movement of Symphony No 5 of Beethoven opens with an energetic four-note motif, one of the most famous in western music. What does it signify?
13. There is a temple in USA where one finds the icons of the 108 karanas. Where is it?
14. The karanas of Natya Sastra are depicted both in the Nataraja temple at Chidambaram and Sarangapani temple in Kumbakonam. What is the notable difference between them?
15. Where does the word "Adavu" appear for the first time in literature?

¹ The objective of the column is not only to test the knowledge of the readers but also to supplement it. They are welcome to send dissenting letters with supporting evidence, if they do not agree with the answers on Page 39. It is important for keeping the record straight.



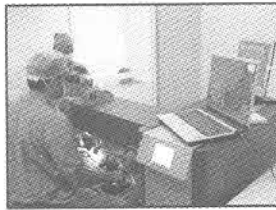
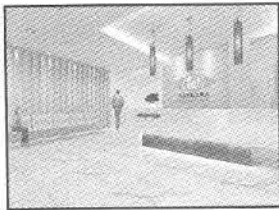
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Eye Care Beyond Compare

ReaderSpeak

As Secretary of the 162 year-old Hindu Higher Secondary School, Triplicane, Chennai, I am delighted to learn that Vidwan S. Ramachandran was an alumnus of our School when G.V. Narayanaswami Iyer, father of GNB was Headmaster (Shanmukha-October-December 2013). I may mention here that Vidwans GNB, T.H. Vinayakaram, Ghatam S. Karthik, Kamal Haasan, S.V. Ranga Rao are some other distinguished alumni.

It is a pity that Vidwan Ramachandran didn't get the recognition that he deserved. May be because he was away from Chennai most of his time. It is interesting to note that he, Prof. TR Subramaniam (Delhi) & Calcutta Krishnamurthy with their career in the three Metros received Sangita Kala Acharya Award only from Music Academy & not Sangita Kalanidhi. Out of sight, out of mind!

In contrast, Bombay Sisters Saroja & Lalita, Bombay Jayashree & Ranjani - Gayathri made the right move (pun intended!) when they shifted to Chennai where they could hone their skills under eminent Gurus & get opportunities to display their talent in various Sabhas here. A reverse Brain Drain perhaps!

Achal Krishnaswamy



Kudos to Dr. Veenalakshmi V. for her illuminating article on the influence of Lalita Sahasra Nama noticed in Syama Sastri kritis. (October-December 2013 "Shanmukha"). She has done much research and points out the many references to Devi Kamakshi and her attributes noticed in Syama Sastri's kritis which can be traced to Lalita Sahasra Nama. Dr. Veenalakshmi writes her research notings in an impactful style. I find her piece educative. I would like to read more articles from her in future issues of "Shanmukha."

N. Hariharan - A former assistant editor of "The Times of India", Bombay, who wrote cultural reviews in the paper for decades.



I am a regular reader of Shanmukha, the beautiful music journal from Mumbai. It provides a lot of interesting information about the art and artistes. I congratulate you for your excellent team work in editing the journal.

Dr. Rudrapatnam N. Tharanathan - A renowned musician who is the younger of the Rudrapatnam Brothers.

Sabha Roundup

Report

Bhajana Mahotsavam



Dr. P.S.Krishnamurthy conducting Namasankeerthanam by members of Shri Satya Sai Madhura Gana Sabha

The Bhajana Mahotsavam started off on 15th January 2014 with rendering of Namasankeerthanam by the members of Shri Satya Sai Madhura Gana Sabha led by Dr. P. S. Krishnamurthy.

Melattur Bhagavatha Mela 16th and 17th January 2014

Jyothi Mohan



(l to r) Kalaimamani S.Kumar, N.Snkant and Aravind

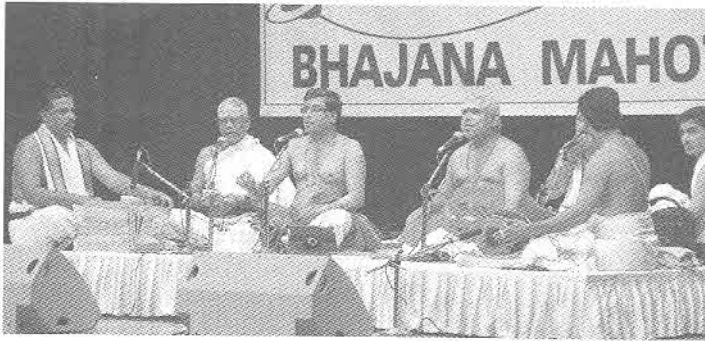
The Bhagavatha Mela tradition goes back to the 11th century. Melattur Venkatarama Sastry with his masterly knowledge of Telugu, Sanskrit, music, dance and drama composed several natyanatakas. The themes of his natyanatakas are from the puranic stories found in Shrimad Bhagavatham. Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha presented two of these, Harischandra and Kamsa Vadham on 16th and 17th of January 2013. I was fortunate to witness only Kamsa Vadham.

Kalaimamani S Natarajan, the President and Chairman of the Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Jayanti Bhagavata Mela Natya Nataka Sangam, Melattur, belongsto a family which has strived to preserve and promote this rare theatrical art form. Natarajan has taken the responsibility of keeping the tradition of the Bhagavatamela alive. With meagre financial support but blessed with a team of dedicated male dancers who give him excellent support in his endeavours, he and his equally dedicated family members have worked incessantly to nurture this ancient tradition and has made this tradition famous worldwide.

The scene opened with Lord Ganesa, played by Venkat, dancing beautifully to a *Praveshadaru*. After blessing those on stage and in the audience the stage was set for the entry of the powerful Kamsa. The arrogant and egoistic Kamsa was brought alive by Kalaimamani S. Kumar. Flamboyant movements, vigorous thumping of the feet and menacing actions with his deadly weapon, instilled fear in the onlookers. Narada's entry, played by Gopi, his foretelling the end of

Kamsa at the hands of his nephew and the rage of Kamsa on hearing this were all very dramatic. The love Vasudeva had for Devaki, his tenderness towards her was beautifully enacted by Aravind with great sensitivity. Kamsa's anger and the ill-treatment meted out to his sister, her fear and helplessness were brilliantly portrayed. Devaki was poignantly played by N. Srikant. Their incarceration, the grim tying up of both Devaki and Vasudeva, with sound effects from the orchestra, was done with a touch of humour. S. Neelakandan and Varadarajan did their assigned roles with conviction. Devaki's fear of losing her babies one by one, her appeal to the cruel brother moved all but brother Kamsa. Her pathos touched a chord in the audience. The manifestation of Vishnu in his Vishwaroopam who suddenly, metamorphosed into infant Krishna lying on his back on a banyan leaf, sucking his toe, seemed like a sleight of body! It was an unbelievable sight and drew loud applause. Veteran Dr. Natarajan played a very convincing Yashoda. The maternal love, adoration for her bundle of joy was palpable. Balarama was played well by Venkat. Krishna slaying the demons Putana, Shakatasura and others as well as subduing the arrogance of Kaliya and dancing on his hood was played by Anirudh. The natakam concluded with Krishna slaying Kamsa and restoring the throne to Ugrasena, (played by S. Krishnamurthy), the rightful King of Mathura. Mellifluous music by Tiruvaivyyaru Brothers Narasimhan and Venkatesan, who sang with great depth and bhavam, assisted by Prabhakaran and Manjunath, added in no small measure to the grandeur of the natakam. Mridangam, very effectively played was by Nagai Sriram and the melodious flute by Gokul. One cannot fail to mention other artistes who played roles in Harischandra. They were Duruva, Sanathkumar and Mahadevan. Total involvement of all the artistes who have a passion for Bhagavatha Mela made this natakam a 'must watch' experience. As Kalaimani Natarajan asserts, Bhagavatha Mela is not entertainment. It is an experience that elevates the soul. The divinity in the dance form is palpable and transports the viewers into another era, one of bhakti and surrender to the Lord.

Namasankeerthanam by Udayalur Shri K.Kalyanaraman & Party 19th and 20th January 2014



Namasankeerthanam by Udayalur K. Kalyanaraman & Party

Thyagaraja Aradhana 21st January 2014



Pooja and Abhishekam being performed for St. Thyagaraja's idol

The 167th Thyagaraja Aradhana day was observed on the 21st of January 2014, the Pushya Bahula Panchami day, when saint composer Thyagaraja attained his samadhi. In the morning, Unchavritti was performed in the traditional style led by Udayalur Shri K. Kalyanaraman and his party and Pooja and Abhishekam for Saint Thyagaraja's panchaloha idol was

followed by the rendering of the Pancharatna kritis by faculty members and the students of the Sangeetha Vidyalaya as also some local musicians.



Group rendering of Pancharatna Kritis

A group - rendering of Pancharatna kritis was also held in the evening at the Sri Shanmukananda Chandrasekarendra Saraswati Auditorium, where local musicians of the sabha and some of the sister institutions of Mumbai paid homage to Saint Thyagaraja. The group rendition with accompaniment on veena, violin, flute, mrudangam and ghatam was well rehearsed, well coordinated and in perfect unison. Tanam was played on veena for each of the pancharatna kriti which made it more appealing.

Centenary Celebration of Life member Shri G. V. Jannah 10th February 2014

Jyothi Mohan



◀ *Smt. Lalitha Jannah and Shri G.V. Jannah*

10th February 2014 was an important day for the Sabha and in the life of one of the senior most members of Sri Shanmukananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha. Shri G.V. Jannah's Centenary was celebrated with great pomp and ceremony by the Sabha at the Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi Auditorium. The stage was beautifully decorated for the event and a hundred glowing kuthuvillakkus added glitter and grace to the hall.



◀ *Kanakabhishekam of Smt. & Shri G. V. Jannah*

The LCD wall was inaugurated and the earlier Poornabhishekam of Shri M.R. Doraiswamy and Smt. Ponnu Doraiswamy held on 9th August 2009 was screened. A hundred Vedic scholars from Tryambakeshwar besides students from Veda Pathashala were present. Narration was by Damal Ramakrishnan. Rig Veda, Shukla Yajurveda, Krishna Yajurveda Shakhai and Sama Veda were recited. The Vedic scholars were honoured. Kanakabhishekam with 108 gold coins was performed by the family. Shree Sooktham was recited. The Sabha honoured

Shri G V Jannah and his wife, Smt. Lalitha Jannah with 108 silver coins, 10 grams silver,

Navaratnamalai, sphaṭikarudraksham, a shawl, Honorary Patronship and a Tanjore painting. Temple honours from local temples and felicitation by various sabhas and cultural organisations followed. The Women's Wing of the Sabha performed kummi around the couple. They were joined by Shri Jannah's daughter and granddaughter, both eminent dancers. Justice B.N. Srikrishna spoke on the occasion. A hundred mentally-challenged children cut hundred cakes whilst the Happy Birthday song was played. In reply, a delighted Mr. Jannah, in his return speech thanked the Sabha for celebrating his centenary in such a grand manner. Expressing his gratitude, he quipped that he had not known it was to be such a grand affair and would love to live another 100 years more! He presented a cheque to the Member's Welfare Fund. His daughter Viji Prakash thanked all the organisations for the good wishes showered on her parents and particularly thanked her Guru Kalyanasundaram and family for the excellent support they have always been. Many of their family members also came up on the stage.



A Scene from Namaste Naana Nani

The Women's Wing staged a play on the occasion, titled "Namaste Naana Naani", written and directed by Smt. Santhosh Rajan. The play began with a panel discussion on the problems being faced by senior citizens and the ways to address the issues. There was plenty of humour amidst the serious discussion, which went down very well with the audience. The cast comprising Smt. Subhalakshmi, Smt. Santhosh Rajan, Natarajan, Pichai, Saipriya Vishwanath and others did justice to their roles. This was followed by a sumptuous lunch. Smt. and Shri Jannah graciously enjoyed the long ceremony and felicitations and interacted with people, blessing all those who came to wish them.

A Tribute to Guru Padmabhushan Lalgudi G. Jayaraman by Smt. Vishaka Hari & Party 15th February 2014

Vasumathi Arvind



(l to r) Arjun Ganesh (Mridangam), Trichy Murali (Ghatam), Smt. Vishaka Hari (Vocal), B. Ananthkrishnan (Violin)

Vishaka Hari's tribute to her Guru the late Padmabhushan Lalgudi G. Jayaraman very aptly began with the shloka *Gurur Brahma Gurur Vishnu* followed by a tanavarnam composed by him in raga Janaranjani. Extolling his virtues, she brought out Lalgudi's accomplishments as a soloist, accompanist, art director, choreographer and composer. His compositions include varnams and kritis. His padavarnam on Goddess Meenakshi is noteworthy as it is a varnam portraying the "navarasas" in "nava ragas", with ragas chosen to suit each rasa.- Bilahari for anandam (joy), Huseni for Sringaram (love), Valaji for Atbhatam (wonder), Sahana for Karunya (kindness), Nadanamakriya for shantham (peace) and so on. He has also composed varnams in rare ragas like Devagandhari, Neelambari and Charukeshi and thus demonstrated that any raga can be sung as an opening piece. Yet another facet of Lalgudi's genius came out in the dance ballet *Jaya Jaya Devi* composed by him.

Vishaka Hari then described her Guru's objective of popularizing Thyagaraja's kritis and his prowess in setting of sangathis in kritis with the correct split of words to understand exactly how Shri Thyagaraja may have sung them. She gave the examples of *Orajupuju*, *Chakkani Raja*, *Nadaloludai*, *Brova Bharama* and *Bhavanuta*.

Lalgudi Jayaraman belonged to the Thyagaraja parampara. Not only did he popularise many rare Thyagaraja kritis but he also set the Lalgudi Pancharatnam in five ragas and popularized them by playing them in concerts and teaching them to his students. Vishaka Hari rendered the Lalgudi Pancharatnam, *Gati Neevani* in Todi. She then presented RTP in Kharaharapriya. The Pallavi, *Rama nee samanamevaru*, *sangeetasagarajaya* was set to khandajati tripata talam. The ragamalika swaras in Behag, and rare ragas like Priyadarshini and Vasanthi were particularly appealing.

Vishaka Hari concluded her musical discourse by mentioning the main contributions of Shri Lalgudi – Bharatiyar's *Teeratha Vilayattupillai* set as a ragamalika where the music matched the sahiyam and tillanas in rare ragas. Out of these she sang the tillana in Mohanakalyani. Lalgudi gave life to many compositions and his contribution to the world of music is never ending.

Vishaka Hari cast her spell yet again the following day with her brilliant musical discourse on *Vamanavataram*.

International Women's Day 8th March 2014

Jyothi Mohan



Chief Guest Ms. Geetha Muralidharan delivering her inaugural address

The Women's Wing of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha organises a programme each year to celebrate International Women's Day. A woman achiever as chief guest, an entertainment programme with "Woman' as theme among other things lined up, makes it an evening of the women, by the women, for the women.

On 8th March 2014 the evening began with a special prayer sung by Dharini Veeraraghavan. The song has a firm tone of conviction, declaring a woman is not weak. On the contrary she is a woman of substance, one who can take on the world confidently. The beautiful poem was couched in beautiful ragas and rendered as a ragamalika with great feeling. Smt. Santhosh Rajan spoke about the high status women enjoyed during the Vedic period, when girls and boys had equal rights to education. Right from the beginning, women were on par with men. The concept of Ardhanarishwar is testimony to the fact. The revolutionary poet Mahakavi Subramanya Bharati championed the cause of women and exhorted them to fight for their rights. The varied activities of the Women's Wing were also outlined.

The Chief Guest of the evening, Ms. Geetha Muralidharan, Executive Director of Export Credit Guarantee Corporation, was introduced to the audience by Smt. Shyamala Sury. Smt. Santhosh Rajan offered her a bouquet and honoured her with a lamp and a shawl. The sponsors for the evening were also called to the dais and felicitated. Dr. Prakriti Bhaskar, who would later present her dance ballet, was honoured similarly. Ms Geetha Muralidharan spoke of women being superior to men in dealing with problems at the work place as they have a higher emotional quotient. Endowed with patience and understanding, they are able to interact better with fellow workers and achieve more, she said. She attributed her success to her parents, who encouraged her to do her best. She also acknowledged the role of her husband and family in supporting her throughout her career. She learnt from her teachers, her colleagues and mentors who all contributed to her success, she said. She and her colleagues offered shawls to Smt. Santhosh Rajan and Smt. Saraswathy Rangaraj. The vote of thanks was proposed by Smt. Saraswathy Rangaraj. Comper for the evening was Smt. Latha Ganesh. The beautiful rangoli in the foyer at the entrance was by Smt. Prema Bharatan while credit for the nice backdrop was Sriram Rajan's

The Women's Wing staged a short skit, 'Storm in a Tea Cup', which spoke about the generation gap. The grandmother managed to inculcate a sense of family values in her young granddaughter, teaching her to look beyond her own selfish desires. Humorous dialogue, quick repartee by the grandmother and good acting were enjoyed by the audience. The play was written and directed by Smt. Santhosh Rajan who played the role of the grandmother very convincingly.



A Scene from 'Storm in a Tea Cup'

Saipriya Vishwanathan as the cantankerous daughter, Subalakshmi Iyer as the mother and Lalitha Iyer as the mother-in-law played their roles with ease.



◀ Mahishasura Mardini

Dr. Jayashree Rajagopal introduced Dr. Prakriti Bhaskar who staged the dance-drama, "Parashakti." The recorded music was arranged by Shri Narayan Mani. Vocal music was by Omanakuttan, Vijay Prakash and Mahalakshmi Iyer. Nattuvangam was by Prakriti Bhaskar and narration by Nikhil Kapoor. The creation of the divine force, Shakti by Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara, her encounter with the evil Mahishasura, culminating with his slaying, was effectively put forth by Prakriti and her team of dancers. The dance ended with the shloka, *Yaa Devi Sarva Bhooteshu*. This brought to an end, the entertaining evening offered by the Women's Wing.

Carnatic Vocal Concert by Abhishek Raghuram 9th March 2014

Jyothi Mohan



(l to r) K.Sathyararayana (Keyboard), Sunder Kumar (Kanjira), Abhishek Raghuram (Vocal), Anantha R. Krishnan (Mridangam)

Abhishek Raghuram, the illustrious grandson of Palghat Raghu and worthy disciple of Shri P S Narayanaswamy gave an engrossing and mind-blowing concert at the Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswati Auditorium on March 9th 2014. He was supported most ably by an enthusiastic young team comprising K. Sathyararayana on the keyboard, Anantha R. Krishnan on the mridangam and Sunder Kumar on the kanjira.

He commenced the kutcheri with a beautiful rendering of Papanasam Sivan's *Shree Valli Devasenapathin* Natabhairavi. Brisk kalpanaswarams were sung to the pallavi. A brief alapana of Nattakurinji led to Lalgudi Jayaraman's *Kandan Seyal Andro*. Mayamalavagowla came in for expansive treatment for Tyagaraja's *Meru Samaana*. The niraval at "Galamunashobhillu", especially the 3rd speed niraval was outstanding. The brilliant sangatis played on the keyboard by Sathyararayana were enhanced by the effective mridangam accompaniment. The 1st speed kalpanaswarams were sung with gay abandon. Complicated korvais with nadaibhedam, kuraippu on ½ edam and cascading swarams in a free flow, enthralled the audience. *Meru Samana* was indeed treated like a formidable mountain by this young genius. The taniavartanam started with Tisranadai. Both Anantha Krishnan and Sunder Kumar played a scintillating tani. A superb Bhairavi alapana led to a bhava - soaked *Amba Kamakshi* of Shyama Shastri. The swaras were played by Satyanarayana and the sahityam was sung by Abhishek. He came up with varied patterns in the niraval in "Bhaktajana" which were very soulful. Noteworthy was the madhyamam in Bhairavi, which was played with the right gamakamby Satyanarayana on his keyboard. Sahitya enunciation was superb! Tyagaraja's *Sarasa Samadana* in Kapi Narayani was sung with great verve. Kalpanaswarams at "Hitavu Maatalendo" flowed like a never-ending

stream and the western-style effects on the keyboard gave it a distinct flavour. The alapana for Mohanam was played first on the keyboard. The gamakas of Mohanam were well played, though slight traces of ma2 and ni3 were heard. Tanam on the keyboard was excellent. The Pallavi-*Sada padasaroja mula nammithi sariga daivamu gaada*, was replete with swaraksharas and the eduppu was at samam. Ragamalika neraval, which is unusual, followed. Ragas were Bhushavali, Chandrajyothi, Sindhubhairavi and Suddha Saveri. Swaras employing brilliant permutations and combinations set to mind-boggling kanakku, sung in tisranadai as well, brought forth bursts of applause from the delighted audience. Pallavi trikalam and tisram were handled with effortless ease by all. All through the complex exercise, melody reigned supreme. The tani was outstanding. Sindhu Bhairavi came in for elaboration next. I had never realised Sindhu Bhairavi had so many shades and tints. The magic he created out of novel explorations in the raga was unbelievable. He did full justice to Lalgudi's Pahaditillana with its infinite variety of sangatis. Satya added embellishment to every nuance sung by Abhishek. Maharaja Swati Tirunal's mangalam *Bhujaga Shayino* in Yadukulakambhoji was also sung with great feeling. It was indeed a soulful, memorable concert.



ERRATUM

In the Oct-Dec 2013 issue of Shanmukha, on page 38 under Sabha Round up, Bhagyada Lakshmi Baramma has been wrongly mentioned as a composition of Annamacharya in the review of Kum.A. Kanyakumari's violin concert.

It is a composition of Purandaradasa.

We regret the error and apologise for the same.



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Answers to Quiz on Sangeeta and Natya

1. Thyagaraja*
2. In the Panchartna kriti of Arabhi (*Saadhinchane*) the refrain at the end of each swara / sahitya sequence is not the Pallavi but the charanam "Samayaniki". It is called Upapallavi.
3. Bharata's Natya Sastra where it is referred to as "jati"
4. Bilahari
5. The madhyamam is slightly higher than the prati madhyamam in sruti value and very close to panchamam and is also called as chyuta panchama madhyamam .
6. It is a sampurna raga with all the seven notes and there are sets of swaras that are next to each other. This can be easily found on the frets of veenai.
7. Syama Sastri's three swarajatis in Todi, Bhairavi and Yadukulakambhoji
8. "Chalamela" composed by Moolaiveedu Rangaswamy Nattuvanar.
9. The swaras used in general in Bageshree are: Teevra Ri, Komal Ga, Shuddha Ma, Teevra Dha and Komal Ni. In the Audhava-Shadava variant the Rishabha and Panchamam in aroha and Panchamam in avaroha are omitted. In the second variant of shadhava - shadhava type only Panchamam is absent. It is called Shuddha Bageshree and the Carnatic Sriranjani is its close equivalent. In the third variant of Shadhava-Sampurna type Panchamam is absent in aroha with a vakra prayoga in avaroha
10. The consensus is Gwalior Gharana. But the followers of Agra gharana point out that their system existed in the days of dhrupad and hence is the forerunner of all other gharanas. According to one school a musician cannot claim to belong to Agra gharana unless he has been trained in dhrupad and dhamar.
11. Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan
12. "Fate knocking at the door", according to the composer (Music, Daniel T Politoske)
13. Kadavul temple in the Saiva Siddhanta Church in Kaua'i in the Hawaiian Islands.
14. In Chidambaram the dancers are females whereas in Kumbakonam and Tanjavur they are males. In Prambanan, Java, one finds a male -female couple in the sculptures.
15. In Tulaja Maharaja's Sangita Saramritam (18th century)

* Source : Biography of Bharati by U. V. Swaminatha Iyer

Scores (one mark for each correct answer)

Less than 6 : Hope is eternal! Start on *sarali varisai*.

6-10 : Good progress! Fit to learn *varnam*.

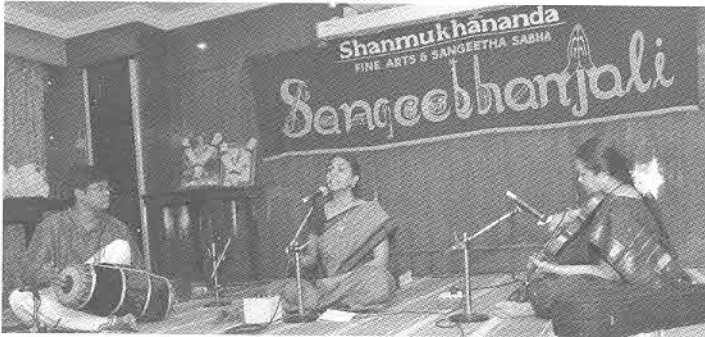
11-15 : Congratulations! Proceed to Ragam, Tanam and Pallavi.

Happenings at the Vidyalaya

Report

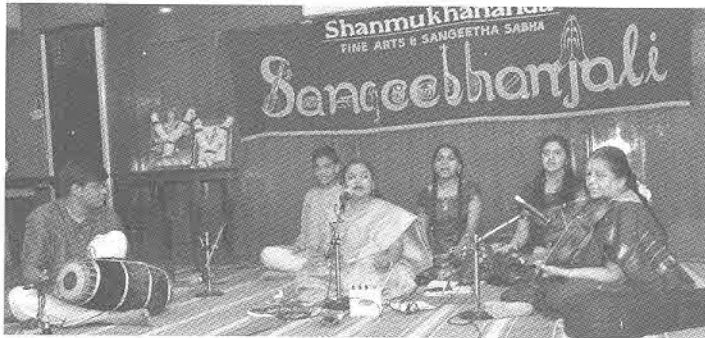
Sri Purandaradasar & Sri Tallapakam Annamacharya Day 25th January 2014

Vasumathi Arvind



(l to r) Aditya Rajagopalan (Mridangam), Priya Suresh (Vocal), Shanta Balasubramaniam (Violin)

Priya Suresh commenced her recital on a lively note with Purandaradasa's *Sharanu Siddhivinayaka* in Nattai. An alapana of Abhogi preceded Annamacharya's *Idaramu*. After a brief alapana of Pantuvarali, Priya sang *Ninne nodi dhanya* by Purandaradasa. *Govindarchita* by Annamacharya was the next song which followed an alapana of Khamas. Annamacharya's *Isurulu* in Atana was a fast paced rendition. Purandaradasa's *Inudaya* was sung after a brief alapana of Chandrakauns. Priya concluded her recital with two more compositions of Purandaradasa - *Dasanamadi* in Nadanamakriya and a soulful *Yadavanipa* in Sivaranjani. Her concert stood out on account of her bright voice with perfect sruthi alignment and her clear enunciation of sahyita.



(l to r) Aditya Rajagopalan (mridangam), Sarada Subramaniam (Vocal), Shanta Balasubramaniam (Violin)

Sarada Subramaniam, a disciple of Shri Nedunuri Krishnamurthy began her recital with a brief alapana of Khamas and rendered Annamacharya's *Singara Muritivi*. This was followed by an excellent rendition of *Vodabadagadavo*, an Annamacharya composition in the raga Vijayanagari. An alapana of Mohanam preceded a bhava laden rendition of Annamacharya's *Ade Chudare Mohana*. A flash of Mayamalavagaula followed by Annamacharya's *Narayanachyuta*, an alapana of Brindavanasaranga and a beautiful rendition of *Dayamadoranga* by Purandaradasa and

Bandaneneranga , also by Purandaradasa in raga Vaasanti along with a shloka were the concluding items of Sarada's recital.

The artists were accompanied by Shanta Balasubramaniam on the violin and Aditya Rajagopalan on the mridangam. Bhanumati Ganesh compered the programme.

Syama Sastri & Subbaraya Sastri Day 1st February 2014

Vasumathi Arvind



(l to r) Rohit Prasad (Mridangam), Vimarshini Jairam (Vocal), Vishnudas (Violin)

Vimarshini Jairam opened her performance with a brief alapana of Begada and an excellent rendition of Subbaraya Sastri's *Shankari Neeve*. Sung in the right tempo, it set the pace for her recital that evening. Syama Sastri's *Devi Brova* in Chintamani was an authentic and bhava laden rendition. A brief sketch of Thodi brought out the essence of the raga and was followed by Syama Sastri's *Ninne Nammi*. *Parvathi Ninnu* in Kalkada, set to Adi tala (Tisra Nadai) was very impressive bringing out the intricacies of Tisra Nadai and Syama Sastri's mastery over laya. *Shri Patimukha* by Syama Sastri in Saveri, preceded by a beautiful alapana concluded the eclectic performance. The highlight of Vimarshini's recital was her clear, mellifluous voice which brought out the nuances of the ragas in the sangatis of all the kritis.



(l to r) Rohit Prasad (Mridangam), Rupa Karthik (Vocal), Vishnudas (Violin)

Rupa Karthik commenced her recital with Syama Sastri's *Biraanavara* in Kalyani. This was followed by Subbaraya Sastri's *Janani Ninnuvina* in Reethigowlai. The next two Syama Sastri compositions, *Saroadalanetri* in Shankarabharanam and *Sari Evvamma* in Bhairavi were well-rendered. The swara-sahitya and the chittaswaram of *Sari Evvamma* sung in 2 speeds is worth mentioning. Syama Sastri's *Kamakshi* in Madhyamavati was indeed a fitting finale for Rupa's performance which was soothing to the ears on account of her pleasing voice.

Shri Vishnudas accompanied the artistes on the violin. Rohit Prasad's mridangam accompaniment embellished each sangati of the kritis rendered by both artistes. The programme was compered by Dhanalakshmi Sundaram.

Shri Amarnath Sury complimented both the artistes in his speech .He said that while Vimarshini, a product of the Sangeetha Vidyalaya, had already fallen into the groove of concert singing and was capable of rising to great heights with perseverance, Rupa Karthik had good potential and should hone her skills with more commitment.

Shri S.Seshadri Memorial Talent Exposure Concert 28th February 2014

Jyothi Mohan



(l to r) Harekrishna Prafulla Rath (Tabla), Prasad Patwardhan (Vocal), Prakash Chitnis (Harmonium)

February 28th saw the showcasing of the Vidyalaya's talent in the Shri S. Seshadri Memorial Talent Exposure Concert at Jasubhai Convention Hall. The evening featured a Hindustani classical vocal recital by Shri Prasad Patwardhan and a Bharatanatyam presentation by 16 students of the Dance School of the Vidyalaya. The Talent Exposure Concert is aimed at providing a platform to the best budding talent in the Vidyalaya so as to help them get over stage fear and gain confidence to perform before larger audiences.

Shri Prasad Patwardhan who has been under the tutelage of Shri Suresh Degwekar for the past 13 years, is a student of the 5th Year at the Vidyalaya. His performance was the first Hindustani Vocal music event in the Talent Exposure programme. He commenced with a vilambit khayal ,*Ban than ka jo chali* in Raag Kedar set to Ek taal .This was followed by a drut composition, *Kanhare Nandanandan param niranjan* in teen taal. He also sang a composition *Phagva brij dekhan ko chalo ri* in Raag Basant set to teen taal. He was supported very ably on the harmonium, by Shri Prakash Chitnis who has accompanied several leading musicians. Tabla accompaniment was by Shri Harekrishna Prafulla Rath who also accompanies several leading musicians and

Kathak dancers. Shri Prasad is endowed with a powerful voice and has good potential. The Ragas were handled with ease and the khayal was rendered well. With more training and practice he can reach greater heights in the field of music.



◀ The 16 young Bharatanatyam dancers along with (l to r) Convenor Smt. Santhosh Rajan, Guru Smt. Jyothi Mohan and Director of the Vidyalaya Smt. Radha Nambodiri

The dance recital by 16 young students of the Vidyalaya gripped the attention of the houseful audience from the opening item which was a sloka



*Shy Sita and Sakhi -
Pranamyaa and Ananya*

describing Lord Ganesha. Pranamyaa and Anindita, both in the 4th Year, paid their salutations to the Lord with good abhinaya. The Tisra Alaripu that followed was danced by Pranamyaa and Aashvi and was marked by perfect angashudham and talam. Jatiswaram in Ragam Vasantha, set to Roopaka Talam was performed by Pranamyaa, Aashvi, Anindita and Paloma. Graceful movements, very good synchronisation and beautiful smiles on the dancer's faces made this item a delight to watch. The ragamalika Sabdam, set to Misra Chapu Talam, *Dayaradan Pudalvan* was danced by Ananya, Anindita, Pranamyaa, Priyadarshini and Shalini. Excerpts from the Ramayana incorporated into the song were enacted with very good abhinaya by all the artistes. The bashful Sita played by Pranamyaa and Ananya as her concerned sakhi were appreciated by all. Anindita and Priyadarshini also lived their roles with apt expressions. The performance ended with a Tillana in Ragam Hindolam set to Adi Talam. Performed by Shraddha, Mansi, Dipali and Shweta of the 6th Year and Viji, Jwala and Reena of the 7th Year, it was a fitting finale to the evening's recital. The group choreography was very interesting. Intricate and complicated footwork and beautiful stances, with *korvais* in *pancha nadai* were performed with zest and skill by the artistes. The convenor of the Vidyalaya, Smt. Santosh Rajan commended the efforts of the artistes. The Director of the Vidyalaya, Smt. Radha Namboodiri congratulated the artistes on their good performance. It was heartening to see Jasubhai Convention Hall packed perhaps like never before, for a Talent Exposure programme.

Patnam Subramanya Iyer, Poochi Sreenivasa Iyengar, Muthiah Bhagavathar, Mysore Vasudevachar and Other Contemporary Composers' Day 15th March 2014

Vasumathi Arvind



*(l to r) Suresh Sethumadhavan (Mridangam), A. K. Gayathry and M.S. Suja (Vocal),
S.R. Balasubramaniam (Violin)*

The concert by M.S. Suja and A.K. Gayathry was marked by a selection of a good variety of kritis by different composers set in appealing ragas and different talas. A brisk rendering of G. N. Balasubramaniam's *Varavallabha* in Hamsadhwani was followed by a brief alapana of Dharmavathi by Gayathry in which she brought out all the characteristic features of the raga. The kriti *Bhajana Seya Rada* by Mysore Vasudevachar was a good rendition. Ramnad Sreenivasa Iyengar's popular kriti *Saraguna Palimpa* in Kedaragowla and Patnam Subramanya Iyer's *Marivere* in Latangi were presented well by the duo. Suja sang an evocative alapana of Saveri which was followed by the kriti *Shri Kamakoti* by Mysore Sadashiva Rao. The duo concluded their recital with Patnam Subramanya Iyer's *Maravakave* in Sama, a favourite kriti of the Semmangudi school. Suja's and Gayathry's voices complimented each other and their rendering of kritis spoke volumes of a good pathantharam.



(l to r) Suresh Sethumadhavan (Mridangam), Kanchana Balaji Manyam (Vocal),
S.R. Balasubramaniam (Violin)

In a bright and clear voice, Kanchana Balaji Manyam began her recital with G. N. Balasubramaniam's *Kari Mukha Varada* in Nattai followed by a brisk rendering of the not so commonly heard *Ninnu Joochi* in Saurashtram by Patnam Subramanya Iyer. *Rama ika nannu* in Sahana and *Paritanamichite* in Bilahari, both composed by Patnam Subramanya Iyer were rendered well by Kanchana. Although brief, she did full justice to the alapana of the rare raga Pushpalatika which preceded Tirupati Narayanaswamy's kriti *Ikananina Na*. A bhava laden rendition of Mysore Vasudevachar's *Brocheva* in Khamas and Muthiah Bhagawathar's *Vanchatonu Na* in Kamarajani brought Kanchana's recital to a close.

The artistes were accompanied by S.R. Balasubramaniam on the violin and Suresh Sethumadhavan on the mridangam.

Sudha Subramaniam compered the programme. The programme was covered by the television channel "Janadesh". It was telecast in their cultural news segment with sound bites from Smt. Santhosh Rajan, Convenor and Shri Amarnath Sury about the activities of the Vidyalaya. All the participating artistes were presented with gifts sponsored by Smt. Jayalakshmi Narayanan, a well-wisher and a rasika.

**SRI SHANMUKHANANDA KANCHI MAHASWAMI
SANGEETHA SANGRAHAALAY
SUMMARY OF ARCHIVES**

Summary of Audios

	Carnatic	Hindustani	Total
Concerts	11,969	1,632	13,601
Duration	26,814 hours	3,450 hours	30,264 hours
Tracks	99,244	10,288	1,09,532
Size	1,511.2 GB	194.2 GB	1,705.4 GB
Classifications	345	323	668
Main Artistes Covered	1,045 Artistes	335 Artistes	1,380 Artistes
Accompanists Covered	1,182 Artistes	116 Artistes	1,298 Artistes
Venues / Sabhas Covered	356	41	397
Cities Covered	189	43	232
Years Covered	1928 to 2010	1935 to 2009	1928 to 2010
Tracks Format	Mp3 44.1 Khz. 128 kbps Stereo 16 bit		
Tag	Id3 Tag Version 1.1 and Version 2.2		

Summary of Videos

Classification	Videos	Tracks	Size
Carnatic	1,328	2,439	829.3G
Hindustani	241	394	124.7G
Devotional	1,334	1,677	433.3G
Dance	209	397	118.8G
All	3,112	4,907	15063.G

Total Size of Archives

Carnatic Archives (Audio)	1,511.2 GB *
Hindustani Archives (Audio)	194.2 GB *
Videos - All	1,506.3 GB *
Total	3,211.7 GB *

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